

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Notes of the Month.

The Annual Meetings of our Church are again events of the past, and we may congratulate ourselves that they proved so successful. The meetings themselves, not to mention the Annual Service, were not well attended, although the proceedings at the meetings were harmonious and encouraging. But until we make better use of the opportunity for united worship we shall not realise all that our coming together in other respects needs as its spiritual consummation. Hence we sincerely trust that next year the service of the Tuesday evening will be much better attended than was the case this year.

* *

One of the most encouraging meetings was that held in connection with the Social Service Union. It seemed as if the disappointment suffered by the non-appearance of Professor Meredith put the other speakers on their mettle, and both the opening contributions by the Rev. E. H. Pickering and Rev. G. L. Phelps, respectively, were distinctly good and stimulating. This was seen in its effect upon the subse-

quent discussion which struck at least one auditor as being far more to the point than was the discussion at the Sunday School Conference at Moneyrea. In the case of the latter the shortness of time for discussion always seems to tell against a really good and fruitful conference so far as the discussion is concerned.

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As regards the new officials elected at the Annual Meetings there was praiseworthy unanimity, and we wish them a successful and profitable period of service. The newly-elected Moderator (the Rev. G. L. Phelps) will, we hope, devote his energies and abilities to the more efficient prosecution of the appeal on behalf of the Sustentation Fund. Little was unfortunately done during the last few months to increase the capital of the Fund and thereby permit of large grants being distributed to the ministers. It is an object which should surely commend itself to our generous laity, especially when they realise how badly our ministers compare with the ministers of the General Assembly. We are confident that it is only necessary to make the facts plain to our members for them to place the Fund in a far better financial position. The result would be that every minister, and through him every congregation, would reap the benefit. We are hopeful that something really satisfactory may be accomplished in the immediate future. In the meantime, we rejoice that our brethren in the faith in Great Britain are carrying to a successful conclusion their endeavours to raise £20,000. But it must be remembered

that the benefits forthcoming for ministers will not help to increase stipends in Ireland. That we must do for ourselves, and neither the will nor the ability can be lacking.

* *

The revival of the Garden Party amply justified itself. Favoured by fine weather the beautiful grounds of "The Finaghy," made an ideal centre for such a function, and the kind and hospitable welcome extended by Mr. and Mrs. James Moore made all the guests in the mood for friendly intercourse. Nor would we omit a reference to the splendid arrangements made by the special Sub-Committee of the Church for providing refreshments for tired persons feeling the heat and burden of the day. The catering was excellent, and we have rarely attended a gathering where both quality and quantity were so admirably conserved. Grateful thanks are due to the host and hostess first and foremost, and also to the officials in charge of the arrangements.

* *

Those who were present at the Rev. J. H. Weatherall's lecture on June 16th will long remember his thoughtful and inspiring utterance on a very important subject. In the large audience were some outsiders, and we have heard from them most appreciative comments. Those of us who knew the lecturer and had heard him on other occasions, notably at the Triennial Conference in Leeds, realised once again the secret of his power. He knows and can well elucidate the essentials of the religious life. Passing by the merely superficial things of religion he seizes upon the fundamental facts and factors. Intensely in earnest, as if he really cared supremely for spiritual things and their domination in human affairs, he communicates a like sense of values and a similar conception of their outstanding importance to his hearers. Moreover, his striking ability to think clearly and consecutively and to express briefly and concisely his thoughts without

manuscript gives directness and force to his appeal. We regret that no extended report of the lecture appeared in the papers, and we can only hope that there may be an opportunity of seeing the printed work on some later occasion. It was a message timely and telling for a much wider audience than even that which assembled in the First Church.

* *

We are glad to learn that our Banbridge congregation can now see an end to its period of pulpit supplies, and that soon they will have a regular minister by the acceptance of their call given to the Rev. Percival Godding, of Ballyclare. Sometimes the policy of "Wait and See" is unduly prolonged in its application to a vacant pulpit with disastrous effect to the congregation concerned. We therefore wish our Banbridge friends and Mr. Godding every success, and hope that from this new arrangement mutual happiness and prosperity may be forthcoming. Our one regret is that Banbridge gains where Ballyclare loses, and we shall rejoice to learn in good time of a suitable successor to Mr. Godding being found for Ballyclare.

* *

The death of Mr. A. Kennedy Stewart, though not unexpected to those who knew of his serious illness, came as a great shock to a wide circle of friends and acquaintances. While he had many interests and took his place in public affairs, we think of him more particularly as a loyal and life-long member of our religious community, not too absorbed in the activities of his own congregation at Moneyrea to have no time or thought for the larger life of the Non-Subscribing Church. He served on its Committees, rendered notable service as Hon. Treasurer of the Orphan Society, and in many ways vindicated his robust Unitarian faith by his life. While his loss means very much to us all, we would especially think of his bereaved sister, and tender to her our heartfelt sympathy.

THE ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIANS

The Annual Meetings of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, of the Association, of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians, and of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland were held on Tuesday and Wednesday, 15th and 16th June, in the Church in Rosemary Street, Belfast, and in the Central Hall adjoining.

REMONSTRANT SYNOD OF ULSTER.

The Remonstrant Synod assembled at 12 o'clock on Tuesday. Proceedings opened in the usual way with Hymn, Scripture-reading and Prayer, the lesson read being the 8th Psalm. The out-going Moderator, The Rev. J. Glynne Davies, of Comber, stated that the work of his term of office had been mainly a matter of routine. He referred to the after-effects of the Great War under which there was still a state of turmoil everywhere, bringing home to the minds of all earnest church people the great need of a living faith in religion to bring the world back to a sane condition.

The Rev. J. A. Kelly having been elected Moderator for the ensuing year, observed that it was for the third time that the honour had been conferred upon him, the first occasion having occurred as long as thirty-six years ago. Rev. Mathew Watkins was elected Clerk, and the Rev. Eustace Thompson Assistant Clerk. Rev. J. A. Kelly reported that an offer had been made by a religious body for the Church property—Meeting House and Manse—at Ballymena, an offer which he held to be a satisfactory one in view of the position of the said property and the trouble it involved. The Sub-Committee and Trustees were empowered to proceed to the disposal of the property if they should see fit to accept the said offer.

ASSOCIATION OF NON-SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIANS.

The Meeting of the Association was held later the same afternoon. The President, Rev. E. H. Pickering, of

All Souls', Belfast, at the opening of proceedings read the 58th chapter of Isaiah. Rev. J. Glynne Davies, on election to the Presidential Chair for the ensuing year, made a speech in which referring to the League of Nations, he said it had done little so far, only because the people at large have not supported it. The appeal it makes before the world is to the ideal, urging men to forget their natural being and to have in consideration the fact that they ought to be rational beings. The League was deserving of the support of the churches. He said also that, in his opinion, what Ireland was wanting at the present time was not a special Bill or Act of Parliament but a new spirit, and suggested that the Churches of the Non-Subscribing denomination could do much good work towards doing away with bitterness in connection with the Irish Parliament we were likely to get. In reference to the recent Triennial Conference held at Leeds, he said he had observed signs of the passing away of the old tendency of mere rationalism and of dwelling upon mere ethics, and the growing of a new tendency towards spirituality and religious principle. His experience of Presbyterianism since his settling in work in Ireland led him to the conclusion that what our co-religionists in England were specially in need of was "a Church" and organisation.

The Rev. Alfred Turner, in presenting the Report of the Orphan Society, pleaded for increased and multiplied subscriptions in view of the unusually large number of orphans seeking support at the present time. He explained the unfortunate way in which many people had come to be under the erroneous impression that the Society had superabundant resources; the balance shown in the accounts did not, as so many had supposed, represent a surplus above requirements, but merely the indispensable and inadequate provision for the forthcoming period.

UNION FOR SOCIAL SERVICE.

A Meeting of the Union for Social Service was held at 5 o'clock, in the Central Hall, the Moderator of the

Non-Subscribing Church, the Very Rev. Alfred Turner, in the chair. Disappointed by the inability of the principal speaker expected, Professor H. O. Meredith, of Queen's University, Belfast, to keep his engagement, the audience nevertheless listened with interest and profit to an interesting address from Rev. E. H. Pickering, Secretary of the Union, and to good speeches of several who followed him. Mr. Pickering gave an account of the early Christian Church, which he described as a powerful organisation for social service, which it rendered in many forms for the well-being and for the supply of the needs of its members; for instance, making travelling both possible and safe in an age and circumstances in which without such assistance as it afforded it would be both difficult and perilous to ordinary people. The State, said Mr. Pickering, now does much that the churches used to do, and he contended that by such means it was done with inevitable inadequacy since charity cannot be secularised. He quoted Mr. Clutton Brock as having recently expressed that opinion by the statement that the Secularist views a man as a gregarious unit, whilst the Christian views him as a child of God. He pointed to the proper recognition of this proper Christian point of view in the form devised by the Presbyterians for their war memorial, namely, a hostel for the safe and pleasant dwelling of their young people in Belfast who had come from country homes. He suggested that the movement for Social Service was the only means of re-establishing unity among different sections of the Christian Church as affording the one possibility of bridging over dividing differences.

Mr. Phelps followed with what was in main a digest of the lecture on this subject delivered by Dr. Gore, ex-Bishop of Oxford, to a Unitarian audience at a Conference at Essex Hall, London. The others who spoke were Mrs. Slipper, Revs. H. J. Rossington, G. V. Crook, John Barron, and the Chairman.

DIVINE SERVICE.

A Service was held at 8 o'clock, which

was led by the Moderator of the Church, who also preached, taking for his text words from Matt. ix. 16, 17—"No man putteth a piece of undressed cloth upon an old garment . . . neither do men put new wine into old wineskins."

COMMUNION SERVICE.

The proceedings on Wednesday began with the Communion Service at half-past ten, led by the outgoing Moderator, assisted by Revs. Geo. J. Slipper, of Newry, and E. H. Pickering.

BUSINESS MEETING OF THE GENERAL SYNOD.

In his speech, before retiring from office, Mr. Turner, referring to the anxious and troublous times, said we must pray to God in particular for peace within our own shores and for the establishment of settled order and of the common good.

He mentioned the fact that the Church had sustained the loss of many faithful members, naming in particular Mr. Robert Dixon, a member of a family well known for its long connection with Non-Subscription, and Mr. Archibald Kennedy Stewart, a faithful member of the Moneyrea Congregation, esteemed as a man of high integrity, and for several years serving as Honorary Treasurer of the Orphan Society. Mr. Turner spoke of the need for increased maintenance of the Church as it was imperative that its work should be carried on. There had been a tendency of late for Churches to endeavour to come together in unity, but we should show that we cared more for truth than for unity. It was for us to persuade men that we need not fear Truth's advent, because it is that which should free them from all that is sordid and mean and bring them on to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Rev. G. L. Phelps, of Holywood, was elected Moderator for the ensuing year, and Rev. G. J. Slipper was re-elected Clerk.

The new Moderator, after thanking the fathers and brethren for the honour conferred upon him, said that whatever differences of opinion there might be as to the real needs of the country or the

proper measures for providing for its good government, he believed there were no members of their own Church who did not view with abhorrence the present prevalence of acts of assassination and lawlessness. He did not believe they were indicative of the character of any portion of Irish people who were good-hearted and neighbourly, and left to themselves would find a solution of their difficulties, but that the present deplorable state of things was due to their being misled in a direction contrary to their nature. He passed on to the necessity for an effort to increase the remuneration of the clergy in face of the serious increase in the cost of living. He mentioned the decision of the Unitarians in England to raise a sum of £20,000 for the purpose of increasing the stipends of their ministers, and pointed out that unless the standard thus to be attained—admittedly inadequate as it would be—were not equalled by our Churches in Ireland, these could not be manned in future as they had been in the past. Further, he urged that more use should be made of their church organisation by the Non-Subscribing Presbyterians in Ireland, declaring his own willingness to undertake increased labours if their desire to act upon his recommendation should involve that result.

The Treasurer, in presenting his Statement of Accounts, asked for increased Congregational contributions to the Incidental Fund, stating that the printing which had formerly cost £6 or £7 now cost upwards of £30.

Mr. Rossington, who had been a delegate to the English Sustentation Fund, explained the details of the English Scheme. Of the money to be raised, it had been decided that £8,000 should not be capitalized but expended in the course of a period of seven years in augmentation of the stipends of ministers in large towns to a minimum of £250, and of the other stipends as far as possible, a further sum of £8,000 being expended upon the education of ministers' children, the residue of the money contributed being equally divided between these two objects.

MOTIONS BROUGHT FORWARD.

Among the motions that were brought forward was one moved by the Rev. A. Whitford, of Moneyrea, as Convener of the Temperance Committee in favour of Local Option accompanied by compensation. Another motion was moved by Rev. E. H. Pickering in the following terms, "We re-assert our faith in the League of Nations broad based upon the people's will as the only effective means of securing the peace of the world, and recommend to the members of our churches the formation of branches of the League of Nations Organisation wherever possible." Mr. Kelly moved a resolution in favour of financial support of the Hibernian Bible Society by the churches of our denomination. All these motions were carried unanimously.

GARDEN PARTY.

A Garden Party was held in the afternoon in grounds kindly thrown open for the purpose by Mr. and Mrs. James Moore, at their residence at the Finaghy, Balmoral. This was pronounced universally "a great success," and Mr. Moore, in response to the vote of thanks to himself and Mrs. Moore for the kind manner in which they had placed their grounds at the disposal of the Synod, said that it was a happiness which they would always remember.

ANNUAL DINNER.

The Annual Dinner took place at the Cafe Royal, in Wellington Place, Belfast. The arrangement of the company at one long table was held by some to make for a sense of unity of spirit; and although others would seem to have preferred the division by tables which was the arrangement in some other years, all are believed to consent that they dined both wisely and well.

THE ANNUAL LECTURE.

The Annual Lecture was delivered by the Rev. J. H. Weatherall, of Essex Church, London, and was deeply appreciated by a larger audience than any seen on corresponding occasions for several years. Perhaps it was friendly interest in a minister of

distinction reared in a manse in Ireland that had drawn some individuals among the hearers ; but whatever their ground of interest and anticipation, no one who was present could have been otherwise than thankful afterwards for having been there.

The subject of the Lecture was "Prayer and Modern Thought." Mr. Weatherall introduced it with a reference to his grateful remembrance of contact in youth with certain types of piety in Ireland such as those of Revs. Charles J. M'Alister and R. J. Orr and others whom he named, suggesting that it was to that youthful experience that the choice of his topic had been due. Modern thought, he said, was not always in the direction of those types of piety, but might rather be compared to the state of mind of the negro who, having aid his hands on a wasp's nest and beating a hasty retreat, on being asked where he was going to, replied, "Massa, I's not gwine anywhere ; I's only leaving the place where I was at." The lecturer had noticed how often people discussed the question why the churches are nowadays tending to be empty, but how seldom they dwelt upon the real cause for the existence of churches as a place for the offering up of prayer. Once, it is true, they had existed for the offering up of sacrifice, but sacrifice had been the original form of prayer. The future of the churches must depend upon their prayer. If prayer is held to be of no use, the churches will have to be reduced from their former position to that of mere educational institutions for instruction in ethics. One must find out why people are not praying and not believing in prayer as they used to do. Praying is of many kinds. Prayer is adoration, confession, thanksgiving. It is against petitionary prayer that the common objection is raised. Even if there were no kind of a belief in God at all, prayer of the former kind ought to be retained as represented by a reverential attitude towards the world we live in, without which a man is distorted in mind and is led to act irrationally and imperfectly towards the surroundings amidst which he finds

himself. Surely there should be cultivation of a capacity for admiration of disinterested services of those who believe in and devote themselves to the cleansing of life and the better organisation of society. All wise people see that there must be profit in that kind of prayer. Yet they do not say, "Let us go to the places where they pray." The lecturer did not infer from that that men are essentially non-religious ; he suggested rather that they are inclined to hide their true feelings. He recalled the constant references one had heard to the invariable cheerfulness of the soldiers under which one need not doubt that they hid much sorrow and secret burden of grief or hardship, because they would not "wear their hearts upon their sleeves for daws to peck at."

Modern thought has taught us to realize that there is a standard of truthfulness not formerly understood. A scientific principle is now requisite. It no longer suffices to assure men that they ought to pray on such grounds as the statements that St. Paul said, "Pray without ceasing" and that Jesus prescribed a form of prayer. But a great change had come about in the claims of science, as illustrated by the contrast between the famous Belfast Lecture delivered by Tyndal fifty years ago, and such utterances as those of Sir Oliver Lodge to-day. Tyndal had declared, with all the ardour of the consciousness of new and triumphant discoveries of science, that the whole of hopeful possibilities are to be found in matter solely, and that for the explanation of any mystery it is useless to seek outside of physical science. But now it is being recognised by nearly all scientific men that science can never explain the origin of things—can only answer the question, "How," never the question, "Whence." It no longer claims, for instance, to explain why life took a form of development upon certain lines. It has corrected its ardour of youth and its blatant assertiveness. Philosophic monism explains everything as part of good and as the part expression of the same,

and it thus refutes our daily individual experience that there is an "otherness." When the soul realises that sin has been committed in its past, even in a state of innocence in its past, how can it believe that there is nothing but the absolute good? Prayer is an instinct of the human heart. If we are told that in praying we are only praying to ourself as part of that which makes up the one existing Whole, we reply that we feel that we are praying to that which is other than ourself, that we have something here within us which is infinitely more real to us than anything we can be told about interstellar space or the origin of the universe and the certainty of a future day in which the coldness of the earth will be complete, something in us which confirms all that is good in religious teaching, not because of outside authority but because we are so constituted as to admire greatness and goodness. So that he who humbly falls on his knees to pray is nearer the truth than the man who supposes that it is irrational to do so because he has all the knowledge of a Newton. The soul has a right to pray and no one ought to be thwarted by criticism of the faults in his reasoning and the childishness of his thought whilst doing so.

The lecturer said that he believed prayers to be more effective when they were most concrete. It was better to pray not vaguely for the coming of the kingdom but for a particular kind of kingdom of heaven, one for instance in which killing shall not be permissible in any circumstances. It is not foolish to pray for specific things; on the contrary, in doing so we come nearer to God's methods of working upon us. If we pray without any hesitancy from a sense of shame, prayer is bound to be a concrete force in ordinary daily life. We cannot pray a subjective prayer and it not exercise an objective influence going forth to all around us. In conclusion, Mr. Weatherall begged his hearers to trust their instinct to pray despite anything that might be said to them by any other persons or anything they found in books.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE AT MONEYREA.

The Annual Conference of Sunday School Teachers and others interested in Sunday School work was held amidst most fortunate conditions at the Non-Subscribing Church, Moneyrea, on Saturday, 5th June. Whether or not, in response to the fervent wishes of the Convener (who had the responsibility of arranging to convey the greater part of those attending in open brakes), the weather was glorious. By the hour of 3, which was the time announced for opening the proceedings, there was a large attendance of friends belonging to Moneyrea and the neighbouring churches, but the contingent from Belfast and neighbourhood, in which were included two of the speakers and the Convener, did not drive up in their open brakes until well after the half hour. Business, however, was quickly begun, and a congregation of over 300 had the pleasure of listening to three able speakers on "The Importance of the Sunday School." The Opening Hymn, "Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven," was sung most heartily, and then, after the Rev. A. Whitford, of Moneyrea, had offered up prayer, the Moderator, Rev. A. Turner, in a brief speech, introduced the subject of discussion. Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., spoke with great earnestness on "The Importance of the Sunday School to the Community," his main theme being that the general well-being depended upon the moral character and spiritual aspirations of the citizens. Whether they always saw it or not, the Sunday School Teachers were doing a work which in some shape or form bore good fruit. He gave a most vivid and interesting example of this, showing how a boy, whom his Sunday School Teacher had scarcely noticed as being particularly impressed by his words and whom he had lost sight of, met that teacher many years afterwards in another part of the globe, and assured him that he (the teacher) had been responsible by his teaching for the excellent and respected position he had won.

Mr. Percy Andrews spoke next. His subject was "The Importance of the Sunday School from a layman's point of view." He made several excellent points, as for instance, that for religious education the sermon was by itself insufficient, and that the teacher, who was able by his very position to reiterate and expand the important points, was contributing a very large share to the religious education of the members of our churches. He deplored the unwillingness of our better educated laymen to take their fair share of Sunday School work, and also the falling off of interest on the part of the young people in the Sunday School. He ended by suggesting that the Sunday School Committee of the Non-Subscribing Church should place itself in more intimate relationship with our various Sunday Schools, learning the problems with which they were faced and offering constant help and advice.

Rev. G. L. Phelps spoke in his usual incisive way about "The Importance of the Sunday School to the Churches," and certainly succeeded in conveying to all present the conviction that our churches have no future except as our Sunday Schools are able to find means of retaining the young people long enough to inspire them with a sense of responsibility towards the Church. But, he urged, the young people cannot be expected to attend Sunday School and graduate as Church members unless the older members shew by word and deed that they sincerely believe in our Churches and Sunday Schools and the religion they stand for.

The discussion that followed was necessarily of a non-controversial character, since the main purpose of the speakers had been to impress on those present the importance of the Sunday School. The Convener, who opened the discussion, laid stress on this point, promising that in the coming year the Sunday School Committee would do everything it could to make our Sunday Schools more effective. But if they all went away that day with the feeling that everyone of them must seriously consider the well-being of the

Sunday School, the task of the Committee would be much easier. The Moderator also spoke very pungently, and Rev. M. Watkins drew an effective picture of what a devoted layman could do in the Sunday School, taking his example from his own Sunday School at Mountpottinger. We will spare the blushes of the example and withhold his name, hinting only that in his stature he is a veritable Saul among the people. Mrs. J. Glynn Davies made a racy little speech, and shewed by humorous examples the strange effects of much of our incoherent Sunday School teaching upon the minds of the children. Mr. Harold Smith, the newly appointed missionary at Stanhope Street, made his debut at our Conference in a pointed little speech about the urgent need for doing all that is possible to retain our young people. The speech making was brought to a close by Mr. Charles M'Kisack and Mr. J. Griffiths who ably proposed and seconded a vote of thanks (in anticipation) to the minister and congregation of Moneyrea for their kind hospitality. This was as heartily carried as the excellent tea was afterwards heartily enjoyed. After the collection and the singing of "Lord, speak to me that I may speak," the Moderator pronounced the Benediction. A certain amount of time was then consumed in the consumption of the excellent tea provided in the two school-houses, but our efforts were vain to do full justice to the large-hearted hospitality of the Moneyrea people. The great majority remained for another hour or two strolling about the pleasant uplands of Moneyrea and then departed for home, unanimous that a delightful day had been spent, and each one resolute (we hope) to get up early in the morning and attend to the duties of the Sunday School and the claims of public worship.



Memorial Notices.

MR. ARCHIBALD KENNEDY STEWART.

It is with sincere regret that we record the death of Mr. A. K. Stewart, a life-long member of our church at

Moneyrea. The funeral took place on Friday, June 11th. Service was conducted at Mr. Stewart's residence, Mt. Hobart, Dundonald, by the Rev. Dr. Bingham, minister of Dundonald Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. Alfred Turner, Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. A large number of friends and sympathisers attended the funeral at Moneyrea. Service was conducted in the church by the minister (Rev. A. Whitford), and Rev. J. A. Kelly, of Dunmurry, Co. Antrim, who, in the course of an address, spoke very appreciatively of the many services Mr. Stewart had rendered to the Non-Subscribing Church of Ireland. The service at the graveside was conducted by Rev. H. J. Rossington and Rev. M. Watkins.

Mr. Stewart always took a very active interest not only in the Church at Moneyrea, but also in the denomination to which we belong, being our representative at the Annual Meeting of Synod, a member of the Presbytery of Bangor, Treasurer for the Orphan Society, and member of the Temperance Committee of the Synod, and also of the Sustentation Fund Committee.

Mr. Stewart occupied the position of Managing Director in the firm of Riddels, Ltd., Belfast, and was also a member of the Ulster Liberal Association.

Our departed friend stands in our memories as a type of true manhood; we think of him as a sincere and faithful servant of God, a true helper of his fellow-man. He had a great sympathy with everything human. Mr. Stewart was a man whose genial and friendly nature endeared him to all who knew him; he belongs to those children of God who are large-hearted and loyal. In any movement which had for its object the uplifting of the people he took a keen interest, devoting his powers to humane ends and always an advocate of human liberty.

As a member of Moneyrea church he was a generous supporter of the cause which was always dear to his heart; he had wisdom born of a long experience amid the practical affairs of life, this

was frequently sought and generously given. We cannot think of him as dead—death is swallowed up in the victory of happy memories. Mr. Stewart will continue to live in minds made better by thoughts of one who was indeed a friend.

Upon his grave the stars look down, but the spirit of a great man still lives among us. Some day we will read the meaning of our tears; till we reach the Homeland memory will speak to us of one who was faithful to his trust, loyal to his Church, and faithful to his God.

JAMES CAVEN, BALLYHOSSETT, BALLEE.

This respected member of our church at Ballee, after a prolonged illness, passed away on Wednesday, 26th May, aged 86. He was of a retiring disposition, and his gentle manner and kindly nature were well known and highly appreciated by all with whom he had to do. He was, when health permitted, a constant worshipper, fixed in his own principles, yet tolerant of the sincere faith of those who did not see through his eyes; a lover of plain speech and clean dealing, and rightly severe of anything savouring of cant or insincerity. Deceased leaves a son and daughter, with whom much sympathy is felt by those who know them and had the pleasure of knowing him.

EDWARD BEGGS, BALLYCARRY.

We have to record the death of the late Mr. Edward Beggs, at his residence, Ballycarry, at the advanced age of 85 years. Up to the last few days he enjoyed good health and retained all his faculties. In his early years he was an active member of the Old Presbyterian Church, of which he remained a member.



LESSON NOTES FOR TEACHERS.

[To be used in accordance with the Scheme of instruction for 1920, issued by the Sunday School Committee of the N.S.P.I.]

July 4th. *The Entry into Jerusalem.*
Matthew xxi. 1-11.

In this passage we have an illustration of Matthew's fondness for finding in the events of the life of Jesus the ful-

filment of ancient prophecies. He recalls the words of Zechariah (ix. 9) and by a curious misinterpretation speaks of an ass and a colt, whereas the prophet uses the words "a colt, the foal of an ass," as a fuller description of the ass. Mark and Luke only speak of one animal. The verse in Zechariah does not refer to Jesus, but nevertheless helps to point a lesson. The king who delivered the nation in the time of the prophet came not with pomp but was meek and lowly, like Jesus.

Great crowds were going up to Jerusalem for the Passover, among them were many from Galilee who knew Jesus. Seeing him making for Jerusalem these Galileans thought he was about to triumph over his enemies and set up his kingdom, so they applauded him and sought to make his entry into the Holy City like a triumphal procession. Jesus was at the height of his popularity but remained meek. He was tired and oppressed by the thought of the approaching end. He knew the dangers involved in coming to Jerusalem, though his disciples and the Galileans did not. He was not deceived by his popularity nor did he seek to use it for his own safety. While the crowd cheered he rode on in silent thought, and when the city came into view he wept at the thought of its unpreparedness. He might have used all that enthusiasm to overthrow the opposition by force, but he knew that force could win no lasting victory. He might have remained in Galilee where he was popular and safe, but he felt it to be his duty to bring his message to Jerusalem, and he was not turned aside from duty by the thought of personal danger. He was meek, as Moses was meek; both Jesus and Moses were conscious of having a difficult duty to perform, but were not elated and boastful on that account. They allowed neither popularity nor persecution to turn them aside. Moses did not enter the promised land and Jesus was crucified, but because they were meek personal considerations did not influence them. They were obedient to the divine commands regardless of what happened to themselves. This

is the true meaning of meekness, entire absence of self-conceit and absolute steadfastness to duty. This is one lesson which the entry into Jerusalem teaches.

Picture again that procession.

There were multitudes at Jerusalem who had never heard of Jesus, and as they saw a quiet looking man riding on an ass cheered by a crowd of country folk they asked, Who is this? And when they were told, "This is the prophet, Jesus of Nazareth of Galilee," they would not be much impressed. There was a proverb among the Jews which said, "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" How foolish would seem the enthusiasm of these Galileans to be so excited over this carpenter's son who came from such a place as Nazareth. And in a few days' time, after the crucifixion, it would seem more foolish still. But the Galileans were wiser than they knew, and the knowing ones who scorned the humble Jesus were shortsighted. The unpretentious faithfulness and loyalty of Jesus was more powerful than a great army following a successful general.

July 11th. Say Well and Do Well. Matthew xxi. 28-32. Key text, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Immediately after the entry into Jerusalem the hostility of the chief priests, the Pharisees and the Scribes began to be more marked. They were jealous of the popularity of Jesus and questioned his authority. This brought home to Jesus the difference between those who were loud in their professions of righteousness and those who did not profess to be good. Hence this parable. Notice, Jesus was not thinking of his own experience so much as that of John the Baptist. The Scribes and Pharisees were like the son who, when asked to work in the vineyard, answered, "I go," but went not. They were quick to promise but slow to perform, they professed much, but when John the Baptist came demanding active righteousness they would have nothing to do with him. The sinners were like the son who first refused to work for his father, but afterwards repented and went. They

did not profess to be good, they preferred to follow their own inclinations rather than listen to any call to righteousness, but they came to see the error of their ways and were sorry and changed their ways. Though the parable has this special application to the people with whom Jesus came into contact it has also a lesson for all time.

There are three lessons here. 1st.—Don't make a parade of your piety. Don't make rash promises, but first count the cost. "By their fruits ye shall know them." It is easy and popular to make promises, but it is more honest to refuse unless we are determined to stand by what we have said. 2nd.—There is more hope for people we regard as sinners than for the self-satisfied who profess much and promise much. If we have refused to respond to the call of duty because the demands made seemed too great let us not be Pharisees when we see that we have been in the wrong, but, admitting our mistake, let us remedy it at once. 3rd.—Neither of the sons in the parable represents the best. The world is God's vineyard and we are all called upon to work at tending the vines (cultivating the good) and rooting up the weeds (destroying the evil). Many acknowledge the duty and intend to do it 'some day,' others wait till bitter experience shows them what is best. But the true way of life is to go and work 'to-day,' to acknowledge and do the duty at once.

July 18th. *The Tribute Money.*
Matthew xxii. 15-22. Key text, verse 21.

The enemies of Jesus were alarmed at his popularity, so they tried to undermine it by getting him involved in party politics. They asked him "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" If he answered "Yes," the people would turn against him for siding with a foreign tyrant. If he said "No," they could accuse him of being a rebel against the government. They approach him with flattery, but he sees through them and refuses to be caught. The tribute money bears the image and superscription of Caesar. "Render unto

Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

The answer is non-committal as far as Jesus is concerned, but it committed the Pharisees who used tribute money.

Jesus declined to be drawn into political controversy, but he took the opportunity of insisting that duty to the state does not contradict or abolish duty to God. As God is greater than Caesar so duty to God is of more importance than duty to the state. Jesus did not express any opinion of his own about the tribute money, but showed his questioners that they were themselves committed by their use of Caesar's money, and he went on to point out that they also are committed to paying tribute to God since they lived under His government and received His benefits.

"Render unto Caesar." Though there may be differences of opinion as to the kind of government which is best there can be no difference of opinion as to the need of government of some kind. A policeman directing the traffic at a busy crossing illustrates the benefits of law and order. If every driver were allowed to go just as he liked the result would be confusion, accidents and delay. In countless ways we benefit from living in a state, and something is due from us in return. We should keep the laws and be ready, as far as we have power, to serve the state. Seeing that we cannot live to ourselves alone and depend upon the community for so much we should have regard for the good of the community in our conduct.

"Render unto God." It would be quite impossible for us to live at all were the whole universe not governed by law. We are far more dependent upon the laws of God than we are upon the laws of the government. We are therefore under obligation to obey God's laws and serve Him as far as we have the power. The voice of conscience is the voice of God, and the tribute which God asks of us is obedience to that voice. Tell the story of Theodore Parker and the tortoise.

July 25th, The Two Great Commandments. Matthew xxii. 34-49.

We are here told that one of the Pharisees asked Jesus a question, tempting him, but in the other Gospels where this incident is related we are told that this Pharisee agreed with the answer of Jesus, and that Jesus said to him, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." There is really nothing of a tempting nature in the question, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" It is good to know that Jesus found among the Pharisees one whom he could thoroughly approve. Jesus in his answer quotes from Deuteronomy (vi. 5) and Leviticus (xix. 18).

"Love God." God seems so great and mysterious that we are inclined to stand in awe of Him and fear Him. When Jesus and the ancient law say "love God," they mean that we should obey His laws, not from fear of consequences, but because we love righteousness and truth for their own sakes. If we really love God we shall do what is right, not from fear of punishment, but because we know God wants us to do it, just as children who love their parents are anxious to please them and not to cause them pain or worry. "With all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," indicates a very thorough love. We must love with our whole being. This is the first commandment, because if we love God in this way we shall love goodness, truth, beauty, love and everything that God is.

"Love thy neighbour." Think of how much of the misery that is in the world is due to our being jealous and envious of our neighbours. If instead we were as anxious for their welfare as for our own how different life would be. Then we should co-operate with them and not compete, and that would be to the advantage of all. This is just what it means to love our neighbour 'as thyself.' Further, one way of showing our love of God is to love our neighbours. Tell the dream of Abou Ben Adhem. In his dream he saw an angel writing

in a book the names of those who love God. Abou asked that he might be written down as one who loves his fellow-men. The next night the angel came again,

And showed the names whom the love of God had bless'd

And lo, Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.



Reports.

'Unity Guild.—The first outing of the Guild this Session was held on Saturday, May, 22nd to Scrabo. We travelled by the 2-15 p.m. train to Newtownards, and were met by the Rev. R. M. King, who conducted us to the church, the use of which was kindly placed at our disposal. After unburdening ourselves of our parcels, coats, etc., we wended our way to the monument and were well rewarded for our efforts with a fine view of Strangford Lough and the surrounding country. On our return to Newtownards tea was partaken of, and our thanks are due to Mr. and the Misses King for the kind services which they rendered us. It seems a pity that more members of the Guild do not avail themselves of these outings, as they afford an opportunity both for the ministers and members of the different churches to meet for friendly intercourse. We were very glad to welcome Mr. Smith and his party among us, and it is gratifying to learn that the membership of the Guild will be augmented by members from the Mission.

The Annual Service was held on Sunday, May 23rd, in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, when the Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., conducted the service. It was encouraging to see a decided improvement in the attendance at this service. The collection, which amounted to £2 2s. 0d. will be given to the Belfast Hospital for Sick Children, Queen Street.

N.B.—The date of the July outing has been changed from the 10th to the 24th.

Belfast ; Domestic Mission.—It is encouraging to report that since the middle of April a new interest has been created and successfully maintained. Attendances at Sunday Services are quite good ; the average in the morning being 35, while the evening is 58. The choir has been re-formed and a very willing and devoted band of young people are doing their utmost to brighten the musical portion of our services. The Sunday School is slowly but surely growing in numbers. In the morning it resolves itself into one class, principally elder scholars, while in the afternoon we have five classes with an average total attendance of 40 scholars. The School Provident Fund has re-opened to which several scholars are subscribing. Saturday afternoon Picnic Rambles have been introduced, all of which have been immensely successful, about 20 young people attending and revelling in the delights of our countryside. The elder girls have signified their desire to undertake the responsibility of providing flowers for the Communion Table, and to this end a small Flower Committee has been formed which will collect its funds and flower supplies. During the summer months wild flowers will be gathered, while in the winter the Flower Fund will meet the demands for rather more expensive flowers. The Missionary has visited all who retain their interest in the Mission, and while being kindly received by all is also pleased to note that several, who in the earlier months of the year severed their connection are gradually returning to our service. The summer months do not bring heavy demands for relief. However, it is gratifying to know that several needy cases have been successfully dealt with. Children's Flower Services are arranged for Sunday, June 27th, when special hymns and choruses will be rendered by the Scholars and Choir. Morning and Afternoon Services will be conducted by the Missionary, while the Rev. M. Watkins, of Mountpottinger, will officiate in the evening.

* *

Dromore.—On Sunday, June 13th, a stained glass window was unveiled

as a memorial to the men connected with the congregation who fell in the Great War. The window is designed and made by Messrs. Ward & Partners, of Belfast, and is remarkable alike for its richness of colouring and beauty of design. It shows the figure of an angel giving a crown—symbolic of the Crown of Life—to the warrior, a mail-clad figure kneeling and with drawn sword ; to the left, beyond a gateway, is seen in the distance, amid receding slopes of hill and mountain, the city beautiful of our hopes and dreams. Across the window at the bottom are the words :—" Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a Crown of Life." A brass tablet is also affixed to the slope at the base of the window bearing the inscription :—" This window is erected by the members of the Dromore Unitarian Church in proud and loving memory of the following of their number who fell in the Great War :—Hugh Boal, Wm. Darragh, Wm. Gill, John Graham, David Prentice, Frederick Bothwell Thompson. Remember the love of them who came not home from the war."

Large congregations assembled at both Morning and Evening Services particularly in the evening, when the members of the local Comrades' Club attended in large numbers. The special preacher for the occasion was the Rev. E. Savell Hicks, M.A., of Dublin, who delivered helpful and inspiring sermons. In the evening addressing the members of the club at the conclusion of his sermon he bade them remember to love all the men who went forth and never returned. They had been known to most of those present. They were proud of them, and they truly bore them in loving remembrance. War was a terrible thing, destructive and sorrow-laden. It brought out some of the worst passions and some of the finest qualities in the human mind ; it made man touch the level of the beasts and rise almost to the heights of the angels in sacrifice, heroism, and love. Many of those present had been overseas, they had seen both aspects. They had known what it was to see and

to experience both extremes. They had known what it was to hate as they had never hated before, and probably to pray as they never had prayed before. That elementary human cry to God for help had risen in hearts here now in some hour of crisis. Possibly they had forgotten it since or looked back on it now and wondered how much of it was then faith and how much of it terror. He would remind them, however, that if the safety and victory of the present was largely won for us by those who were faithful unto death in battle the real development and fruits of victory would be won by those who were faithful until death in the daily life of the present. The world was never in more desperate need than now of men and women who would serve God right. The window represented the angel figure bestowing the Crown of Life to a warrior who laid aside his war gear at the threshold of the wider world of spirit, and beyond the gateway one might see in the distance, small yet clear, the gleaming walls of the City of Hope, the city of our dreams, the fair and better world, the new Jerusalem, the new London, the new Ireland, the new Dromore (if they liked), the ideal, better, purer place for the children of men to dwell in. It was symbol of all we hope for, suffer for, fight and struggle for in peace and in war, for it represented the limit and ideal of human perfection which would be wrought out and accomplished by good men and good women.

The praise portion of the services was admirably sustained by the choir, Mrs. Ruddock presiding at the organ with customary efficiency and ability.

* * *

Mountpottinger.—The advent of "Summer Time" with its light evenings naturally makes for a lessening of activities.

Shortly after Easter a successful Jumble Sale took place, which had for its objective the strengthening of the Sunday School Finances.

On the first Sunday in May the half-yearly Communion Service was held, and a noteworthy feature was the welcoming into the Fellowship of the Church of several young people.

On April 29th a "Song Tea" promoted by the Choir was held in the School-room, but owing doubtless to the period of the year was not as well attended as could have been desired; all the same nearly £5 was raised for the object in view.

Work in connection with the raising of the Endowment and War Memorial Fund is proceeding steadily and the scheme of "Thrift Tickets" in view of the Bazaar next April is being eagerly taken up. If any of the churches are interested in the working of such a scheme they can have full particulars on applying to Mrs. E. R. Jackson, Myrtle Bank, Ravenhill Road, Belfast.

The Annual Floral Service was held on Sunday, June 13th, at 3-30 p.m.; when the Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., was the preacher.



First Presbyterian Church, Belfast. SUNDAY SCHOOL EXCURSION.

The Sunday School Excursion to Greyabbey was one of the most successful for many years. Tempted by the fine weather, and partly by the obtaining of brakes once again, nearly a hundred persons started from the Central Hall, and thanks to careful packing by the superintendent, arrived safe and sound at their destination. The Greyabbey minister (the Rev. W. H. T. Tilson) heartily welcomed us on arrival, and was most hospitably seconded by willing and kindly members of his congregation, the Barnes. The latter's farm buildings received our horses and brakes, and a field not far away received our eager members. This time no shortage of food caused anxiety or physical discomfort, but all who came received and were satisfied. While the younger members of the party let off their energy in games or races, the less young more sedately strolled the lanes or inspected the ruined Abbey. Magnificent weather, most thoughtful hospitality, willing workers and good fellowship combined to make the day most enjoyable and memorable.

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